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615 163 of live children for samples of selected phratries in 1963 and 1972:

Table 3. Average Number of Living Children per Married Woman in Four Selected Badaga Villages (Listed Hierarchically)

	1963	1972
one Wodeya village (highest group)	3.63 (N=35)	3.55 (N=49)
one Adikiri Lingayat village	3.49 (N=43)	3.72 (N=58)
one Gauda village	3.14 (N=84)	3.60 (N=88)
one Toreya village (lowest group)	3.12 (N=17)	3.05 (N=20)

In Table 3, N stands for the number of married women in each selected village for whom the number of living children was ascertainable. In practice this included virtually all wives, including barren wives and second or third wives, but excluded a very few aged widows, in each village population.

(842) The selective factors underlying these statistical differences certainly include differential exposure to venereal diseases and consequent low fertility of some women, either through tubal occlusion or through the miscarriages and congenital abnormalities that syphilis causes. The names of the phratries are listed in hierarchical order, 615 554 163 Wodeyas being the most superior ritually and Toreyas the most inferior. Very impressionistically, and only for purposes of the present analysis, we might label the Wodeyas and Adikiris "upper class," the Gaudas "middle class," and the Toreyas "lower class." With such a categorization we might then expect that the upper class has a higher average of live children because it can afford better maternity and medical care, better food, and the more reliable scientific medical practitioners. Yet nothing could be further from the 615 554 present case. It is the middle class who get all of these things most readily. The upper class phratry of Wodeyas is in fact a poor, and medically conservative, educationally backward group who are upper *only* in the sense of their vegetarianism, exclusivity, and religious orthodoxy (cf. 10.12). Many of their males perform priestly services for the other Badaga phratries as well as farming; many of their villages lie quite close to towns. The middle-class group are (548) farmers, but not priests, and they have the highest rate of contact

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with non-Badaga prostitutes. The lower-class group, as we shall see below (3.7—*c*), has some extra-marital sexual contact with a wide range of other Badaga men, including of course some who have also had relations with diseased prostitutes. Since the four chosen villages are representative in their subcultures of these four phratries, are all accessible to therapists and midwives, are located within three miles of each other in the middle of the plateau, are all at the same elevation of about 6,500 feet, but in no instances were using contraceptives in 1963, it is difficult to avoid explaining the divergence between the average number of children in these families by any other means than this hypothesis: that *there is a positive correlation between socio-ritual status* (*or extent of religious orthodoxy*) *and the fertility of women.* I realize this may sound like moralizing; but it is the census data and not I myself that shows the "good," orthodox Badaga parents to have more live births than those who indulge more in inter-community, extra-marital relations.

The number of stillbirths and abortions is something I know nothing about. In one well-to-do Adikiri farming family which happened to include two skilled midwife-therapists, a woman married at the age of 12 conceived first at 18, and then had a total of five live births and another five miscarriages or neonate deaths. I have no reason to believe either that her husband (whom I know well) was diseased or that her birth history is really atypical.

Sex Education

3.2. A useful way of approaching the matter of Badaga sexual practice is to ask how the individual acquires his knowledge of the matter. The answer is that diverse sources are available, including conversation with others, observation of men and animals, and experimentation. We shall elaborate on each of these in turn.

Conversation on sexual matters occurs not only with members of one's own sex but also with lovers. Since in each case the party with whom one holds such conversation may be either an age-mate or some older person, there is a relatively free flow of information from one generation to another, and between the two sexes. Nonetheless some propriety is observed in seeking the information. Parents do not usually give any sex instruction to their children, nor do elder brothers generally give it to younger siblings or elder sisters to their younger sisters. The mother's brother, who is a kind of

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615 582 554 837 some of the higher status phratries, in the last century often managed to talk, kiss or even have coitus with men of superior phratries. If a Toreya woman had no child, it is said her husband would not be greatly upset to find she was having an affair with a man of higher status, for as that man was "purer" any child that he sired would also be good and pure. It is noteworthy that Wodeya men, who belonged to the highest of all phratries, did not usually have casual relationships with non-Wodeya women (cf. 3.1).

615 554 836 837 601 It is very shameful for a higher-status Gauda man to be discovered having relations with a Toreya girl. This is because the Gaudas, the majority group among Badagas — regardless of their age and generation level, and although they have no kin ties with Toreyas — call all Toreyas of whatever generation "son" or "daughter." In turn the Toreyas address all Gaudas and higher Badaga phratry members as "grandfather" or "grandmother." Such paternalism acts as a psychological restraint, one Badaga suggested. Similarly Toreya men do not have coitus with Gauda women because they are scared of getting caught at it, and also because calling a Gauda girl "grandmother" is really a deterrent, my informants say. It is noteworthy that if an illicit relationship is developing between a Gauda boy and a Toreya girl they do not address each other by these fictive kin terms but by more endearing terms, which if overheard warn others that something unusual is a foot.

615 554 836 (*d*) Less frequently higher-status youths have affairs with girls belonging to another phratry, but one superior in status to the Toreyas.

548 837 (*e*) There has been no identifiable class or community of Badaga prostitutes, although in a very few instances women have adopted this profession, usually as an escape from their unattractive husbands. In general though the sexual partners of Badaga men would be described as lovers and mistresses. Beyond the limits of the community altogether some men do also find full-time prostitutes. There is a Badagu term (*ha:tira giti*) for a sexually loose woman: although she has extra-marital relations she tries to be secretive about them. This contrasts with *su:ve*, a woman who, everyone knows, is keeping a man just for sexual satisfaction or to get some favour from him.

548 837 A kind of borderline case between the mistress and the prostitute (does English have a word for this?) is constituted by girls of the neighbouring Toda and Kota tribes, many of whom are willing to have intercourse with Badaga men, some for the novelty of the

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experience, others for cash or a small present (such as cigrettes or chewing tobacco). The opposite situation, involving Badaga women, does not occur. The Todas think of themselves as the equals of the Badagas and do not always take kindly to this intertribal intercourse. From the male Toda point of view a Toda girl who has given herself to a Badaga has probably been raped by him, and the offender is lucky if he escapes a serious beating at the hands of the woman's husband or husbands (Basel Mission 1905: 30; Emeneau 1971: 613). Not long ago an elderly Englishman guilty of the same offence with a Toda girl was hanged on a tree by unknown persons; and earlier a Tamil Muslim was murdered by a gang of Todas after he had seduced several of their women (Madras 1928: 43-44).

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Relations with Toda women were not always so difficult, however. It used to be possible for a Badaga who wanted to enjoy a Toda girl to be given access to the wife of his Toda trading partner, or else that woman would make some arrangements for him with another girl. Such activity used to be indulged in quite openly and was seemingly acceptable to both Todas and Badagas.

The Kotas are considered the lowest in status of all the Nilgiri communities, and so if Badagas had relations with their women it had to be in great secrecy. Kota men would be too scared of the possible consequences to attempt anything with Badaga women. Nonetheless, Kota girls were an easy conquest, for I am told they thought it quite a privilege to have coitus with a Badaga. If a Kota saw that his wife was being seduced by a Badaga he would usually not stop them. It was thought by Kotas that the intelligence and other good qualities of the Badaga man would appear in his offspring, who would grow up as a Kota. In the middle fifties an illuminating case was brought before a council, as a result of a Badaga boy being caught in the embrace of a Kota girl at midday. To hide her shame somewhat at being seen, the girl said she was being raped. Her father stunned the council by saying: "Badagas and Kotas *are* having intercourse; but this boy was doing it in broad daylight!" The implication was that intercourse was permissible between the two groups but only if it were conducted in the secrecy of night.

The Kurumba tribe were greatly feared for their sorcery, and Badagas did not have sexual encounters with Kurumba women; nor under ordinary circumstances did the opposite occur. There is however an epic Badaga folksong about Kadare Gauda, seemingly based on a historical personage, whose brother's wife was seduced

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837 by a Kurumba who used magic to get her. How else could he have
177 succeeded?

548 Nowadays the patronizing of lowland prostitutes is seemingly more common than are casual relationships with Toda or Kota girls or for that matter local Kanarese or Tamilian girls. The choice of a prostitute is a matter of personal taste. Some men do not mind older women, others want them very young; some prefer Anglo-Indians, others Malayalis, and so on. The deciding factor is usually what one can pay. Both the main towns of the Nilgiris, Coonoor and Ootacamund, have a variety of women available. The pimps one approaches do not keep the girls, but can call them from their houses; a client has to pay the pimp, not the girl. During the main tourist season a crew of high-class prostitutes is maintained in, but not by, the main Ootacamund hotels. These women circulate from one hotel to another every few days. At the other end of the scale one occasionally encounters village prostitutes. In a typical case a lowland man kept two non-Badaga women, whom he claimed to be his wife and her sister, but whom he made available to anybody for a small payment.

835 (*f*) Intercourse with Badaga girls born in one's own village is tech-
836 nically incestuous and as such is frowned upon. Nonetheless men do sometimes have affairs with their parallel cousins who, in kinship terminology, would be called "sisters." It a girl visits a neighbour's house too often, or a youth from that house finds reasons to visit hers, their families get suspicious about the matter. They tell him to go away while the girl is present, or else ask her why she has to visit at this particular time. If such hints do not suffice, the girl may find herself quickly married to somebody else in another village.

835 (*g*) Real intrafamilial incest is extremely rare, except in the common case of a man having relations with the wife of an elder brother, a matter that can usually be excused. I know of few instances of genuine incest, but can present as meagre evidence of Badagas having an incest wish the fact that a tale about it is told repeatedly and listened to eagerly. This tale, supposedly of Tamil origin, is about a man whose wife died and who then had relations with his own daughter, thinking of her as a fruit that he had grown himself and would now enjoy. There are heavy prohibitions on sexual intercourse between a brother and sister. Were relations to occur between them their entire family would be despised. A brother and sister should not even sit together and talk in front of their elders. In fact affection

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between the two, or between a father and his daughter, has often led to a divorce.

In the estimate of one good informant, when incest occurs within the family it is most often with an elder brother's wife, and less commonly with a son's wife or with the father's second wife when she is a man's stepmother. Mother/son, father/daughter and brother/sister relations are the rarest of all, if indeed they ever occur.

The above seven types of illicit relationship are listed in my informant's order, going from (*a*) the most common but least serious, to (*g*), the most uncommon and offensive. Despite the considerable amount of evidence collected on these various types, I was told by old people that it used to be thought a very bad thing for a husband to commit adultery, and if his wife or another person found out about it she would go to the village headman who would call a meeting of the council and then fine the guilty person: in adultery the man was always at fault.

Among Badagas the public attitude towards a cuckolded husband is that he is a foolish, weak and lazy man, for otherwise his wife could not have been led astray. However, his wife also loses all respect with the other village women, who may well fear that they could lose their own husbands to her too. Nor can the adulterous man expect any accolades for his behaviour. Today a case of adultery may go before a council, which can still fine the adulterer; or her husband may quietly divorce an adulterous wife; or he might give the adulterer a beating, provided he had some alternate explanation for it to offer his neighbours.

Attitudes towards extra-marital love and prostitution are clearly expressed in Badaga proverbs and legends. Witness the following still current proverbs: "Three things are equal to each other: a harlot, an adulterer, and a piece of ground which is always in danger of being washed away by a river" (Metz 1864: 97); "If the food is spoiled, the day is spoiled; if the wife is spoiled, one's life is spoiled;" "The immoral woman will not believe her own husband;" "The whoremonger will vanish away like a handful of wind" (Metz 1864: 98); and again, "Lust is deceitful, I have lost my blanket through it" (Metz 1864: 96). A few lines from an epic poem conjure up a vision of limbo that is worthy of Dante's *Inferno :*

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'Oh brother, who are these
Most wretched of them all?
In naked shame they're bound
To rugged gnarled trees.
They ever seem to talk,
But none are there to hear.'
'Oh sister, you surely have heard who these are:
Abandoned and profligate women, who wandered astray
From virtue and home. They have nothing wherewith
To cover their shame. They are hungry and cold.' (Gover 1871: 85).

In short, there was a touch of puritanism in Badaga oral literature that was apparently more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

The Consummation of Marriage

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3.8. The early part of this chapter has summarized some of the kinds of sexual activity and instruction that precede marriage. It is now time to analyze the sexual behaviour that accompanies a wedding. In doing so we shall not consider the symbolic aspects of the ceremony nor its sociological features; save only to mention that hamlets are exogamous, and the preferred bride is the daughter of one's father's sister, or otherwise a mother's brother's daughter is almost equally acceptable. In the Toreya phratry alone marriage with a sister's daughter is permissible, though infrequent. An ethnographic account of Badaga marriage may be found in Thurston (1909: 103-09).

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In the nineteenth century a form of trial marriage was engaged in. A young man might then approach a girl's parents, and if they liked him they would invite him to their house, where he would be feasted and allowed to sleep with the girl. In the morning she would express her opinion of the youth to her parents, and her mother would then signal to him the family's decision, by giving him a meal of curried meat or similarly rich fare if he was acceptable, or otherwise just some boiled rice with a watery vegetable relish. "The same freedom, however, that on the following morning is allowed to the female, is also allowed to the youth; and should any change have taken place in his inclinations, he walks away without further ceremony" (Hark-